

## Medical Model of Care

American women have been conditioned to distrust their bodies when it comes to pregnancy and childbirth. The fact that nearly one in every four pregnancies ends with a cesarean delivery is, in and of itself, proof of the sad state of obstetrics today. Women do not believe in their ability to give birth as nature intended, free of intervention and medication. I invite you to examine the trends in American obstetrics and how the medical model of care leaves women unsuspecting victims in what could be the most empowering event in their lives.

When considering all the options available to pregnant women today, the medical model is the one most women are familiar with. The medical model of care includes all forms of prenatal testing, active management of labor and invasive procedures routinely performed on mothers and babies.

The medical model mind set is apparent very early on when women visit their obstetricians to begin their course of prenatal care. During the pregnancy, at each doctor visit, certain tests are presented to the women, often with no explanation of why, or if, they are necessary; and no mention of side effects. There is no real information given, as most women would never question the guidance and authority of their doctors.

While the medical model of care during pregnancy and delivery is by far the most popular, it is not necessarily the safest. The tests and procedures performed on women and babies are not always required, or even accurate. Be very certain of your decision, early on in your pregnancy, if the medical model is the one you want to adhere to. Once you step onto the roller coaster ride of prenatal testing, procedures, and the "active management of labor" preferred by most physicians, it is most impossible to get off.